

Sheep never sold so high at this season of the year as at present. The sheep and lambs are being better prepared than ever before, and the lamb and mutton that one is now able to get, even in an average restaurant, is so good that it tends to increase the general demand for that class of meat. There is yet plenty of lamb stew from tough old ewes and rams, and it is not hard to find mutton chops of boot-straw tenderness, but in the main the mutton that is offered is from younger, better bred and better fed sheep than formerly.

We have recently heard it remarked that farmers are not having the general prosperity said to exist in this country. We individually take exception to this view, and would modify it somewhat by saying that the rapid rise of prices is not so marked as in other lines. Those who will take the trouble to refer back to last year's number of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE and tick off the present with those prices will be able to notice a very marked improvement in the prices of live stock especially. Export and butchers' cattle, feeders, stockers, sheep, lambs, hogs, horses, cheese, butter, and eggs, show marked advances on even last year's prices. Again, look at the statistical returns of loan companies, with mortgages repaid, farm buildings sold, and improved. In almost all lines the farmer is in a much better position than two years ago. He is not enjoying boom times, but we venture to assert that collectively the farmers of Ontario are in a much better position than two years ago.

Buttermakers are having their innings in the market now. The price on the farmer's market in Toronto runs from 26c. to 30c. per lb. and the stores are retailing it at 30c. to 35c. The scarcity of the article accounts for the price, and the scarcity is accounted for partly by the great increase in the export of butter, but mostly by the fact that which in the last six months of 1899 amounted to not less than 25,491,760 lbs., valued at \$4,947,438, as compared with an export for the same period in 1898 of 15,739,038 lbs., valued at \$2,894,798, and in 1897 of 11,522,516 lbs., valued at \$2,039,197. The price of cheese is ruling so high and promising to continue to be high, that many farmers have been turning to making butter, and the result has been that the supply has tended to make butter scarce and consequently high. The outlook for dairymen is indeed encouraging.